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# Intermezzo: A Love Story

By George O'Neil

Ladies and gentlemen...  
tonight, Mr. Stenborg and I  
leave for our homes in Sweden.  
And, while in a few months,  
I must start again on another tour...  
Thomas has decided  
to settle down at home...  
and to give to young artists  
the benefit of his wisdom and his genius.  
New York has always been kind to us.  
And so I am glad that New York is the scene  
of my last concert...  
with a man, who, for many years,  
has been for me more than an accompanist.  
A man whom I am proud to claim...  
as a friend and a teacher...  
whose loss, I am sure, you'll regret  
as keenly as I do:  
Thomas Stenborg.  
- Did you ever see an impresario cry?  
- I never did, Mr. Moler.  
Well, watch me.  
Well, Thomas, here we are, home.  
Yes, home.  
The reporters are waiting.  
Get ready for the cameras.  
Let's stand on our heads for the press.  
Step lively.  
- Where, Mommy? Where is he?  
- Look, Margit, here he is.  
There he is, darling.  
- Daddy. I remember him.  
- My baby. My little Ann Marie.  
Hello, darling.  
Welcome home, Holger.  
Hello, Greta darling.  
Hello, Greta. How are you?  
- Thomas, it's good to see you.  
- Wonderful to see you.  
- Dad.  
- Good heavens! It's Eric.  
I didn't recognize you.  
I can't kiss you anymore.  
What do we do? How do you do?

- It's good to have you home.
- Thanks very much. It's good to be home.
- Hello, Emma.
- Emma, here's our wanderer.

You've taken wonderful care of them.

- It's good to have you back, sir.
- Thank you.

Hello. Who is this?

- His name's Angus, Daddy. He's my dog.
- So the family's grown since I've been away.

How are you, Angus?

Come on.

I'm really home at last.

I can't believe I've ever been away.

Look at it. Nothing's changed.

We have a game we play while you're away...

that you haven't really left us at all.

There's better air to breathe in this room than anywhere else on earth.

It's the truth.

I play the piano, Daddy. I take lessons.

- Do you indeed?
- Yes, I already play Mozart and Beethoven.

That's wonderful, Ann Marie.

Who's your teacher?

A Miss Hoffman. She's a very clever pianist.

Greta Stenborg wants Thomas

to take her for a pupil. She has talent.

She'll be lucky if Thomas takes her.

Do you want to hear me play, Daddy?

I've been waiting to play for you so long.

I'd love to hear you play right now.

If you knew the times I've thought of this moment, back home, with you.

- You played some wrong notes.
- You mean this?

Those are known as dissonant chords.

You'll learn to play them in time.

I don't want to.

- Tell me some piece you do like.
- I will.
- What is it?

- Wait. You'll hear.

This one I like best of all.

We play it almost every evening  
when you're away.  
This is a brand-new record.  
The other one wore out.  
I see. Show me.  
Wait.  
It's beginning.  
You made that music yourself, didn't you?  
- Yes, Daddy wrote that piece.  
- That's why I like it the best.  
I know this so well.  
Here comes the prettiest part.  
Good morning, Miss Hoffman.  
- We haven't met, have we? How do you do?  
- How do you do?  
You've been teaching your pupil  
plenty of self-confidence.  
She's been correcting me.  
She tells me I play false notes.  
He did play something funny, Miss Hoffman.  
Some notes all mashed together.  
Come along.  
Do your lesson well.  
I'll be listening outside.  
I will.  
Now we must begin.  
And one, two, three, four.  
Watch those fingers, three, four.  
One, two...  
- Eric! Where are you going?  
- Never mind.  
I'm going to school,  
and then to a football game.  
Football? Isn't he stupid?  
- But he's a boy.  
- What's that to be so stuck up about?  
Come, come.  
You know what I'm going to do?  
I'm going to do what Thomas has done:  
Settle down.  
When you're ready for that,  
you won't say it so desperately...  
with that determined look in your eye.  
All right, then you're coming with me.

Yes, that's it. We're going away together.  
Everything will be just as it was  
in the beginning.  
Remember the first time we went away?  
It was winter when we left here.  
We crossed the Alps,  
and suddenly it was spring.  
You said the blossoming locusts in Capri  
made everybody sing. Remember?  
It's as if you were telling me a fairytale:  
"Once upon a time. "  
- Once upon a time.  
- Yes.  
- Things are different now, Holger.  
- How?  
- We have a home.  
- We'll run away.  
When we come back,  
we'll be all the more appreciative of it.  
- The children?  
- They can get along without you for a while.  
It does children good  
to take care of themselves.  
Take care of themselves.  
Ann Marie is only six.  
We'll take them with us. That's it.  
Why didn't I think of that before?  
Eric would lose a year at school.  
Of course if you're going to make  
all kinds of difficulties...  
No, please. You know how I'd love  
to come with you.  
But, darling, you must realize  
that our home is my responsibility.  
Just as concerts and practice are yours.  
Yes, I suppose you're right.  
And that spring you spoke of...  
that sort of happiness  
could only come once in one's life.  
Mommy, I've just thought of something.  
- Something important, Mommy.  
- What is it?  
May I invite Miss Hoffman  
to my birthday party?

But, Ann Marie.

Tell Miss Hoffman she'll be very welcome to come to your party.

Thank you.

Miss Hoffman, you're very welcome to come to my birthday party.

We're going to have ice cream and cake.

But really, Mrs. Brandt, I didn't mean to...

Ann Marie will be very disappointed if you don't come. And so will we.

- Won't we, darling?

- Yes. You must come, Miss Hoffman.

- How many candles are there?

- Seven.

- No, eight.

- There's one to grow on.

- Take a deep breath.

- No, wait.

Did you make a wish first?

All right, then, blow.

- Keep going.

- Come on.

She gets her wish.

You must cut the first piece, darling.

- Don't watch.

- Help her, Charles.

Who's the engineer in the family?

- Who gets this?

- The first piece is for Daddy.

- No, darling. Mother must have it.

- It's your birthday. Keep it yourself, silly.

- I'll cut the rest.

- All right.

Not so long ago, your daddy and I went to a birthday party in China.

- In China?

- At a mandarin's house.

His name was Cho-Ching-Chang-Chip-Chop.

- Did you have ice cream and cake?

- No, indeed.

We had swallows' nests, some roasted silkworms...

snake soup, and cricket eggs.

You didn't eat that?

We had to take  
a double helping of everything...  
or the mandarin would have murdered us.  
Well, Uncle Charles,  
nobody will murder you here.  
Please, may I have your attention  
for a moment?  
I have a wonderful surprise for you tonight.  
You've all sat enraptured by the music  
of Rachmaninoff and Paderewski.  
Now you are going to be thrilled...  
by being present  
at the very first recital of someone...  
I'm convinced  
is going to join that distinguished company.  
I trust  
you'll extend an appropriate welcome.  
Miss Brandt, will you do me the honor?  
- I must sign her up immediately.  
- I can't wait to hear her.  
Wait, Daddy.  
Remember, darling?  
How did I do, Mommy?  
- Daddy and I were very proud of you.  
- I'm so glad.  
You did very well.  
- Will you play for my party now?  
- No.  
- Mommy, make Miss Hoffman play, too.  
- Would she play for us?  
Really, Mrs. Brandt, not now.  
Why shouldn't you play?  
I want to show off my pupil.  
Do play for us. We'd all enjoy it.  
Well, maybe they won't listen, anyway.  
Isn't that child astonishing?  
Frankly, I was amazed.  
So was I.  
Here, you little monkey.  
I want to talk to you.  
It's fantastic. The child's become a pianist  
since I've been away. I'm sure...  
- What are you shushing me for?  
- Miss Hoffman.

Miss Hoffman next on the program?  
Having a regular concert, aren't we?  
When Miss Hoffman finishes, Daddy,  
do we play again?  
But, Daddy, you promised.  
Go on. Why do you stop?  
- Bravo!  
- Thank you.  
- Weren't they wonderful, Mommy?  
- Yes, darling, they were.  
Someday, I'm going to accompany Daddy  
that way.  
Of course you are, darling.  
I beg your pardon. Why, it's Miss Hoffman.  
Look who's here.  
- Hello, Miss Hoffman.  
- Hello.  
- Did you sleep as soundly as I did?  
- Charles hates music.  
Poor fellow. Has to make his living  
out of people like us.  
- How are you this evening?  
- Thank you, very well.  
- Isn't Mrs. Brandt with you?  
- No. We had social obligations.  
I'm a fugitive from a very  
dull dinner party.  
What are we going to do?  
How about a glass of wine?  
- I was going home.  
- And so was I. Charles, how about you?  
No. Leave me out. After all that music,  
I'm ready for my bed.  
- Good night, Miss Hoffman, Holger.  
- Good night.  
We'll have a glass of wine without him.  
There must be a caf about.  
- It's late for me.  
- It's never too late for a glass of wine.  
- I adore that part.  
- You did like that concert, didn't you?  
You have a look in your eye  
of someone who has made a feast of music.  
- I envied her so.



- You'd like to do that, wouldn't you?  
- Be up on that concert stage?  
- Yes.  
I'll tell you something.  
I'd rather it had been you up there playing.  
- You're not joking?  
- Of course I'm not joking.  
Good heavens, what a fool I am!  
Of course! Why don't you accompany me?  
- Accompany you?  
- Yes, on the tour. Take Thomas' place.  
- You're not serious?  
- I'm perfectly serious.  
Why didn't I think of it  
the first moment I heard you play?  
What are you thinking about?  
What do you say?  
No, I couldn't do it.  
Even if you mean what you say.  
But I do mean it. Why couldn't you?  
Mr. Stenborg wouldn't forgive me  
if I gave up my studies.  
Thomas knows that I'm desperately in need  
of an accompanist.  
He'd be delighted to think  
that you're taking his place.  
Don't you think it's best for me to stay  
and work as hard as I can for a scholarship?  
A scholarship? I didn't know.  
Now, that's different. In that case,  
I think you should stay here and study.  
That you would even consider me...  
Yes, I know.  
You're profoundly honored and all that.  
- I am, really.  
- I understand.  
You know, I'd forgotten all this.  
The look one sees on these people's faces.  
Yet, it's scarcely any time at all  
since I sat in places like this...  
with just such boys and girls...  
remaking the world to suit ourselves.  
Just as they're doing now.  
- I would like to have known you then.

- Would you?  
You wouldn't have liked me then.  
I was poor and awkward.  
Much too earnest, worked too hard.  
All in all, not a very fetching fellow.  
Please don't laugh at me  
if I tell you something.  
Why should I laugh?  
You see...  
ever since I first began  
to care about music...  
- Yes, it seems strange.  
- What does?  
I had only one idea.  
For years I saved every penny I could...  
to be able to hear you whenever you played.  
Did you? How nice of you to tell me that.  
Nice of me?  
Think of my being able to tell it to you.  
That's what I can't get over.  
Here I am, talking to you  
as if you were an old friend.  
I'm a friend, anyway.  
But only a little while ago, I looked at you  
from such a distance. And now...  
You don't know how fantastic  
it seems to me to be here.  
Does it?  
No. Don't drink any more of that stuff.  
Waiter! Bring us some champagne.  
- Champagne?  
- Yes, champagne's what we need.  
A couple of glasses of champagne...  
and two strangers  
have a rich and happy past.  
You know, there comes a night each year...  
when one senses  
that winter is suddenly over.  
Yes, that spring has come.  
How I look forward to it  
through the dreary months.  
Look, there goes the winter now...  
broken, rushing to the sea.  
Don't you feel when spring comes

that the world is yours just for the asking?  
That there's nothing that you couldn't be?  
Tonight, I would dare anything.  
Or, perhaps, it's only the champagne.  
- Do you know what you remind me of?  
- No. Tell me.  
A Viennese waltz. Smiling but melancholy.  
A melody of the days  
when Vienna was a happy city.  
How poetic you are.  
At twilight, in the spring,  
the music poured through the caf doors.  
Melodies of carefree youth.  
It was there I saw you for the first time.  
Phantom of a Viennese waltz.  
No, I was wrong.  
It wasn't there at all that we first met.  
It was in Budapest, on a summer's night.  
They were playing the Rustle of Spring.  
Yes, that was you.  
You are far away.  
What are you thinking of?  
I'm listening to something.  
- I don't know what.  
- Spring, perhaps.  
Yes, perhaps.  
- Aren't you giving it too much importance?  
- What do you mean?  
You were going at it as if it were  
the climax of a tremendous symphony.  
You'll frighten my neighbors.  
I wasn't conscious of it.  
I'm thinking of going away.  
Are you?  
For long?  
I have been invited  
to visit relatives in Denmark.  
- I can stay as long as I want.  
- I see.  
They won't divert you too much?  
You'll be able to study still?  
- Lf I like.  
- Don't talk as if that weren't important.  
You've applied for

that scholarship in Paris.

Yes, of course. If I get it,

I'll just go on straight to Paris.

I'll try to study by myself.

I shall miss your help, but...

You're running away from it all.

Perhaps it's best that way for both of you.

I've been watching Holger suffer, too.

I thought I was going straight to my goal...

thinking of nothing but my work.

- And now...

- Will this be our last lesson?

If you'll excuse me...

I think I ought to go and see Mrs. Brandt.

Certainly.

Certainly, do that.

You're waiting for me to say something

very wise and helpful at this point.

I'll say to you what I've always said

to myself when things seem too difficult:

Courage, my friend.

- Good morning, Miss Hoffman.

- Good morning, Emma.

- You're very early today. I'll call Ann Marie.

- No, please don't.

May I see Mrs. Brandt?

- I think she's upstairs. I'll go and see.

- Thank you.

- Good morning, Miss Hoffman.

- Good morning.

- Emma said you wanted to see me.

- Yes, Mrs. Brandt.

- Won't you sit down?

- Thank you.

I wanted to tell you that

I can't go on giving lessons to Ann Marie.

Why not?

I have been called to Denmark by relatives.

But your own studies?

Your work with Mr. Stenborg?

It seems such a shame

not to continue with him.

I know, Mrs. Brandt. I'm not happy about it.

We were all very impressed

the night you played for us here...  
with my husband.  
I'm afraid I have no choice.  
I see.  
I'm sorry. Little Ann Marie  
has come to mean so much to me.  
Yes, and you mean a great deal to her.  
I'm afraid she'll be very upset.  
- Will you tell her for me, please?  
- Of course. I'll try to explain.  
Goodbye, Mrs. Brandt.  
Goodbye, Miss Hoffman.  
I'm sure you're doing what's right.  
I hope all goes well with you.  
You are very kind.  
I thought you were never coming.  
What's wrong?  
Nothing. Never mind.  
May I have a glass of wine?  
There is something wrong. Tell me.  
All along I've been hating  
this kind of thing.  
Always meeting you like this, in  
out-of-the-way places. Little dark corners.  
Sneaking about in fear of being seen.  
It's not the way I'd like it to be, either.  
I'm ashamed. And I hate being ashamed.  
Ashamed?  
Look in the mirror.  
How do we look to you?  
Don't be so dramatic.  
You don't like it any more than I do.  
We look what we feel: Two guilty people.  
Why? Because we're in love?  
I haven't any right to be happy  
the way I am happy with you.  
- Anita, please, listen to me.  
- No, I can't.  
- I'm fighting to be sensible.  
- Sensible?  
That's a strange word from those lips.  
Love isn't sensible.  
There are some things  
I can't bring myself to say.

I know. I have a home. I have children.  
I'm a respected, responsible man.  
When I sit here and look at you...  
I only know one thing.  
We must end it.  
We've got to stop seeing each other.  
I see. We just say goodbye,  
never see each other again.  
- It's very simple, isn't it?  
- We must.  
We can't go on lying to ourselves,  
and to people who trust us.  
It's impossible, unbearable.  
You're right.  
Goodbye, Anita.  
Not sitting here like this.  
Let's go.  
Let's walk.  
No, someone may see us.  
Does it matter now?  
They won't see us together ever again.  
There are so many people in the world.  
The days are long now.  
There used to be a shop near here.  
I always stopped to look in.  
All kinds of funny  
lost things in the window.  
Here it is.  
What a strange collection of things.  
Look at that curious clock.  
Holger, I'm going.  
I'm going now.  
Quickly, as if it didn't matter.  
Don't touch me...  
or say anything.  
Don't turn around.  
- Why, that's 750. You've beaten me.  
- Did I?  
Don't feel bad about it, Mommy.  
Isn't it time for Daddy to come home?  
- Mommy.  
- What?  
Isn't it time for Daddy to come home?  
- Yes. Come on, let's play another game.

- Yes.

Let's keep on playing  
till Daddy comes home.

Isn't it somebody's bedtime?

Hello, Daddy.

Hello, my funny little monkey.

- Good evening, Margit.

- Good evening.

- Daddy.

- What is it?

Why are we looking like a thunderstorm?

- Daddy, Miss Hoffman...

- Yes?

She's never going to give me  
piano lessons again.

What does she mean?

She came this morning and went right away.

I'll tell Daddy, darling...

about how we have to find  
a new music teacher.

But why is Miss Hoffman going away?

Come along, darling. It's bedtime.

Just what did Miss Hoffman say?

Miss Hoffman has to go  
and visit relatives in Denmark.

She came to tell me that.

We've had difficulty all day.

- Say good night to Daddy, darling.

- Yes, that's right.

Good night.

Come along.

Run along, darling. Emma's waiting for you.

Is there anything you'd like, Holger?

Coffee, brandy?

No, thank you.

Are things going along well?

With the tour, I mean.

- Is everything settled?

- No, not yet.

You haven't found an accompanist?

No, it's all...

It's not definite yet.

Will you be away long this time?

I don't know. I can't say.

It depends on how Charles  
has arranged the bookings.  
I hope it won't be a long tour.  
But I've been home  
longer than I usually stay.  
For that very reason...  
the days are going to seem  
so much emptier.  
You know, you have your own busy life.  
You've mentioned it so often.  
Yes, I know I have.  
You think I'm getting old?  
Old? What an idea. What a thing to say.  
Of course I suppose we're...  
We're all of us a few months...  
days, weeks older than we have been.  
I want to go with you this time.  
We will go back.  
We'll have some of those lovely,  
gay, irresponsible days.  
We'll be together in strange places  
as we used to be.  
I still want something of life.  
I don't want to be left behind.  
Does that sound very vain and frivolous  
coming from me?  
I see.  
You're answering me.  
You might just as well be saying it.  
I know what it is.  
Margit, I must talk to you.  
No, it's nothing. Forget what I said.  
No, Margit, we must talk.  
Hello, Dad.  
- Did you ask him for me, Mother?  
- No, I forgot.  
Eric wants to know  
whether he can see a picture this evening.  
What? Yes, go ahead.  
Thanks, Dad.  
Margit, I must talk to you.  
Excuse me, Eric.  
- Anita, you can't, you mustn't go.  
- How could you do this?



I couldn't face it.

- I couldn't face being without you.

- But we promised each other.

Yes, I know we did. Is it as easy as that?

- Can you just ride away from life?

- Please, Holger.

What you'd leave behind would haunt you,  
haunt us both forever.

You're not being fair.

It's no easier for me.

- All aboard.

- Goodbye, Holger.

At this very moment

my fate's being decided:

A life with you, or a life alone.

- You are not alone. It is I who am alone.

- Yes, now we're both alone.

Anita, I've broken with my past,  
with everything.

- I have no home any longer.

- All aboard.

Holger, you couldn't have.

What did you say to her?

She couldn't have borne the lies  
any more than we could. I know her.

Besides, she knew the truth already.

She told me first.

- How could you hurt her like that?

- The train's leaving, miss.

What will happen now?

The concert is over.

Will you be good and go to sleep now?

No, leave it on. Just a minute.

Perhaps he'll play another encore.

He's played three.

He hasn't played Intermezzo yet.

Encore!

Intermezzo! You see?

Ann Marie, you're still awake.

You ought to have been asleep  
a long time ago.

It's Daddy, playing all the way from Cannes.

Please, darling.

Emma, make her go to sleep.

You were superb!  
Thank you.  
- Well, what did you think?  
- It's true.  
You played better than  
I've ever heard you play.  
- And you played wonderfully yourself.  
- Do you really think so?  
I hope it's true  
that I've helped you a little.  
- I hope it's not only that.  
- Only what?  
What am I? Your shadow.  
I don't exist without you.  
You're not a shadow.  
How can you talk such nonsense?  
But it's enough.  
Let me be with you like this...  
- always.  
- And will that be enough always?  
The tour is over. Now we can rest awhile.  
It has been the greatest happiness  
I've ever known...  
and the greatest I'll ever know.  
Such happiness couldn't come  
more than once in one's life.  
I know it couldn't.  
Could it?  
Let's not speculate about happiness.  
We're here, and work's over for a while.  
How lovely it is. So peaceful and unreal.  
Like a place in a dream.  
Isn't it exquisite?  
Look, Holger.  
"My love endures...  
"after death. "  
That was written for us.  
And for everyone on earth  
who will ever feel...  
as we do now.  
Monsieur has two violins.  
And never plays even one.  
Yes, I play them.  
But just now I'm on a holiday.

- I play the zither.
- Zither? That's wonderful.
- Is this your little girl?
- Yes, that's my little girl.
- What's her name?
- Her name is Ann Marie.

Ann Marie. How sweet.

- Mine is Marianne.
- What a pretty name.

You know,

today is my little girl's birthday.

Really? And you're so far away.

- She'll be unhappy at that.
- I hope not.

I hope today

that she'll forget that I am so far away.

I would not forget that.

Hello. Where have you been?

Off on your own?

Would you believe it?

I couldn't find a single piano around here.

Only an organ with four pipes missing.

Serves you right. You're not here to work.

- Madame, a letter for you.
- A letter for me?
- Shall I make it descend?
- Yes, make it descend.

Voil!

- What's all the excitement?
- This!

What is it?

If it's an invitation,

you can just turn it down.

I'm not going to let you out of my sight

for one moment, young lady.

- Aren't you going to tell me?
- No.

No, I'm not.

It's nothing to get excited about.

- I want to know about that letter.
- I'll tell you later.

By the way, your letter. What was it about?

- I don't want to make you jealous.
- Jealous?

- It was from Mr. Stenborg.
- From Thomas?
- What did Thomas have to say?
- It's only that I was awarded a scholarship.

Only! And you weren't even going to mention it?

That's extraordinary.

But I don't want it now, Holger.

No, I'm not taking it.

I see.

- And what did Thomas advise in the matter?

- Let's forget it.

It's so pleasant out here.

What's that fragrance? Mimosa?

Yes?

What did you do with the letter?

This is how I feel about the letter.

About anything...

that could come between us.

- What are you thinking of, Holger?

- Nothing. Just...

I was thinking

we should've brought Ann Marie with us.

She would have loved this.

What's the matter?

You said "Ann Marie. "

Did I?

I meant Marianne of course.

How stupid of me.

- Well, skipper, let's make for home.

- No, I don't want to go home.

- Not yet, please.

- What's the matter, Anita?

I'm afraid.

I don't know why, but I am afraid.

I wish we could stay out here forever.

You're just imagining things.

Here, come here. Sit down.

Come here.

What a wonderful day this has been.

Yes. A day to remember always.

I can't bear to see it end.

We'll have others, darling.

Millions of them.

Hold me close, Holger.

Let's do something wonderful  
tomorrow again.

- All right, darling, what shall it be?

- I don't know.

We might watch the sunrise  
on the mountains.

All right.

- We can have a picnic.

- Yes.

I'm game for that.

I'll go and buy things.

What would you like to have?

Let me think.

I'd like some of that wonderful bread...

a bottle of Provenal wine,  
some sardines. Anything you like.

- Goodbye, darling.

- Bye.

- Where did you come from?

- I took the chance of finding you.

Greta wanted a little holiday.

I'm joining her at Antibes.

This is a surprise.

- I traced you through Charles.

- Yes.

It's good to see you, Thomas. Come in.

You'll be comfortable at this little inn.

Mind you, it's very simple.

- It'll be very pleasant for overnight, I'm sure.

- Overnight?

You're not going to run away like that.

We're planning a picnic on the mountain  
tomorrow. You're going to join us.

It's lovely, isn't it? You enjoying it here?

It's perfect. Cut off from the world.

The kind of life I thought I'd never have.

What news of my family, Thomas?

I have a message for you from Ann Marie.

- Nothing wrong?

- No.

She'd like you to bring her a camera  
when you come home.

- Would she?

- Yes.

A camera.

- Holger.

- Yes, Thomas.

I have some papers with me.

- Papers?

- Yes, divorce papers.

Yes, of course.

I asked Margit to let me bring them.

I thought, perhaps, I might be able to persuade you to sign them without delay.

Yes, indeed. Put them down, Thomas.

I'll sign them later.

Why not sign them now, Holger, and get it over with?

Why this extraordinary rush?

Now, Holger, you really must try to think a little of Margit.

Margit? You don't mean to say that she wants to...

Marry again? No, not she.

But I imagine she feels it'll be better for all of you, including the children... if she's legally separated from a man who...

Well, I needn't say...

I suppose you think

I've behaved disgracefully?

It's easy to criticize, Holger.

I don't pretend to account for someone else's feelings.

Won't you sign these now?

Do you think it's as easy as that...

to cut out the best part of one's life?

- Tear up the last roots?

- I thought you had done that long ago.

Yes, my dear, what is it?

- Aren't we going to have our lesson today?

- I'm coming right down.

- Who is that?

- It's a little girl who lives here.

We play together every afternoon.

Have you been giving lessons

during your vacation?

No, she's teaching me.

I'm waiting for you.

You must excuse me, Thomas. Like all ladies, she hates to be kept waiting.

She's 8 years old and her name is Marianne.

Excuse me.

But, Mr. Stenborg.

- Hello.

- This is wonderful. When'd you get here?

- Have you seen Holger?

- Yes, he just left me.

How well you look.

And how are you, my dear? Happy?

But of course. I'm divinely happy.

- This country's very beautiful.

- Yes.

You must come with us tomorrow and see the sunrise. Holger and I...

Perhaps we'll bring Marianne.

She's a little girl Holger

has grown fond of.

I know. I've been watching him with her.

- He misses Ann Marie.

- Did you think that he wouldn't?

I've tried not to think of it at all.

I've tried to pretend there was no past.

And no future?

By the way, let me congratulate you on your scholarship.

- You must be very happy about it.

- But I don't want it.

- It means nothing to me now.

- Really? It meant everything to you once.

Anita, my dear, you have great talent.

It saddens me to think that it'll be wasted.

If I can only be with Holger,

nothing else matters.

And Holger, does he feel the same way?

He loves me.

I know we can be happy.

I wonder if anyone has ever built happiness on the unhappiness of others.

What shall I do?

That's not for me to say.

You must make your own decision.

And whatever it may be,  
I know that it will be...  
the right decision.

What is it?

You don't look real in this light.

- Monsieur Brandt.

- Yes?

It is morning.

- I'm ready. Go and call the others.

- Yes.

Mademoiselle, it is morning. Are you ready?

Yes. I'm coming.

- Good morning, Marianne.

- Good morning.

- Miss Hoffman ready?

- She'll be coming right away.

- And where is the picnic basket?

- Downstairs. Everything's ready.

Come on.

Mr. Stenborg, you must help me.

- There is a train leaving in an hour.

- My dear.

When you and Holger come back,

I shall be gone.

- Have you really made up your mind?

- Yes.

And you're not doing this  
just because of what I said?

No.

We both know where Holger belongs.

Well, I have been an intermezzo in his life.

You gave me a good word once: Courage.

I'm trying to remember it. I'm trying...

Come on, hurry up. The sun is rising.

- Holger, I'm not coming.

- Not coming?

- But why not?

- I didn't sleep very well.

I think I have a cold coming on.

- Shall we postpone it?

- No. You go without me.

Marianne has been

looking forward to it so much.

And Mr. Stenborg will be here



such a short time.

- You're sure you'll be all right?

- Quite sure.

Really, Holger, go along.

It seems such a pity.

Perhaps you're right. Au revoir.

- Goodbye, Holger.

- Goodbye?

Don't you like my French?

What's the matter?

I hope you have a good time.

- See you soon.

- Yes.

But you can't mean you're going after her.

That wouldn't be fair, and you know it.

Yes, you're right. I must let her go.

What could I do but spoil her life?

Just as I've spoiled the lives

of all those dear to me.

- I know you'll always think kindly of her.

- Kindly?

I think my feelings will go

a little deeper than that, Thomas.

As time goes on...

I suppose the memory of her

will grow vague in my mind.

But always in my heart

will remain the image of her loveliness.

And now you'll come back home with me,

won't you?

Home? I have no home, Thomas.

How can I go crawling back home

just because I'm alone?

But, Holger...

Have you got those papers

you wanted me to sign?

- There's no need for them now.

- Give me those papers.

- Please...

- Give them to me. Don't argue with me.

Thanks.

- It's good to have you back at last.

- Thank you. It's nice to see you again.

Here. Where's your baggage ticket?

- Here, I have it.  
- I know, in the usual place.  
- Where do they go, sir?  
- Let's see. I think...  
Why, to my place, of course.  
Thank you, Thomas,  
it's good of you, but I...  
Just take them to the baggage room.  
I'll check them there.  
You see,  
I've decided to leave again tonight.  
- But, Holger...  
- I only came back just to bring this.  
- Remember the camera for Ann Marie?  
- Yes.  
Thomas, I wonder if you'd do me  
just one more favor.  
Why, of course, Holger, anything.  
If you wouldn't mind,  
I'd like to drive out to the school alone.  
I'll see you later.  
I've told them never to cross here!  
I've told them!  
Send the doctor to my house.  
I'm her father, Holger Brandt. Hurry.  
- Mr. Brandt!  
- Where's my wife? Where's Mrs. Brandt?  
Emma, I should be back...  
It was an accident at the schoolhouse.  
The doctor's coming immediately.  
Isn't there anything we can do to help?  
Is there anything you'd like?  
I think I'd just rather be left alone.  
Thanks.  
Daddy.  
Daddy, you've come.  
He's here.  
Won't you come in?  
Eric, look at me.  
Talk to me.  
Why did you come back at all?  
We don't need you anymore.  
Eric, listen to me, please.  
You know, when we're young...

we expect the people we love  
to behave like gods.  
Most of all, I suppose, our fathers.  
And then, sadly, as we grow older...  
we realize we are none of us gods.  
We're all human...  
tragically human...  
and that we all of us make mistakes  
right up to the end of our lives.  
You may understand this one day.  
When you do...  
you may also understand  
what it is to forgive...  
perhaps even your father.  
You see, Eric...  
even if you don't need me anymore...  
now it's I who need you.  
- Doctor!  
- Mr. Brandt.  
Mr. Brandt, your little girl will recover.  
What? Say that again.  
She'll be well again after a long rest.  
I'll be back at noon. Good morning.  
Welcome home.  
Holger, welcome home.